

REMARKS

Claims 9-19 are pending in this application. Claim 9 has been amended in accordance with, *inter alia*, page 8, lns. 2-9 of the specification.

Claims 9, 13 and 14 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) on U.S. Patent No. 6,388,759 (Yoshida), Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2002-023565 (Fukuda) and the “well known art.” Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the amendments to claim 9.

Claim 9 has been amended to require the plurality of input apparatuses of different operability to include at least one input apparatus that is suitable for use by a disabled person and at least one input apparatus that is suitable for use by an able-bodied person, and the controller to determine a longer automatic-clear time for the input apparatus that is suitable for use by a disabled person than for the input apparatus that is suitable for use by an able-bodied person.

Neither Yoshida nor Fukuda discloses or suggests the claimed limitations. The Examiner admits that Yoshida does not disclose the claimed input apparatuses of different operability or the claimed different automatic-clear times. See Page 4 of the Action. The Examiner contends that Fukuda discloses the plurality of input apparatuses and different automatic-clear times. See pages 4-5 of the Action. However, Fukuda fails to disclose or suggest the plurality of input apparatuses includes at least one input apparatus suitable for use by a disabled person and at least one input apparatus suitable for use by an able-bodied person, as required by amended claim 9. Further, Fukuda fails to disclose or suggest having a longer automatic-clear time for the input apparatus suitable for use by a disabled person than for the input apparatus suitable for use by an able-bodied person, as required by amended claim 9.

The Examiner contends that Fukuda’s ten-key and LCD touch panel correspond to the claimed plurality of input apparatuses of different operability. See Page 4 of the Action. However, no part of Fukuda discloses or suggests having at least one input apparatus that is easier to be manipulated than the key-board or LCD touch panel which are typical operation unit mainly designed for the able-bodied persons. See page 1, lns. 20-25 of the Specification. For

example, it is widely-understood that such operation units require relatively elaborate finger coordination and touch precision. Thus, Fukuda fails to disclose or suggest having at least one input apparatus that is suitable for use by the disabled person and at least one input apparatus that is suitable for use by the able-bodied person.

Further, Fukuda fails to disclose or suggest having a longer automatic-clear time for the input apparatus suitable for use by a disabled person than for the input apparatus suitable for use by the able-bodied person. Fukuda cannot disclose or suggest this limitation that is based on having at least one input apparatus suitable for use by a disabled person, when Fukuda does not even disclose such input apparatus, as explained above.

The rejection of claims 9, 13 and 14 under 35 USC 103(a) on Yoshida, Fukuda and the “well known art” should be withdrawn because they do not teach or suggest requiring at least one input apparatus suitable for use by a disabled person and a controller to determine a longer auto-clear time for such an apparatus than an input apparatus suitable for use by an able-bodied person, as required by claim 9.

The remaining obviousness rejections rely on Yoshida, Fukuda and the “well known art” and thus should be withdrawn as well because they do not provide the teachings for which they are cited.

In light of the above, a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952**, referencing Docket No. **325772033200**.

Respectfully submitted,

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